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TITLE: ORNAMENTAL GARDEN HOSE STORAGE DEVICE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to storage of items within functional garden items and more particularly to containers for storage and access to hoses or hose-reels
5 where the hose storage container is or forms part of a whole item which item has a function separate from and/or unrelated to the function of a hose storage container.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

Any discussion of the prior art throughout the specification should in no way be considered as an admission that such prior art is widely known or forms part of
10 common general knowledge in the field.

Kownacki et al in US Patent 5,988,207 and Smith in US Patent 6,467,499 teach us the use of a decorative storage devices for a garden hose.

One problem that exists with prior art is that the storage device is often located far from the desired point of use such that the hose is too short and/or the hose-reel
15 must be very large to accommodate sufficient hose to accomplish the desired task. Especially in larger gardens it is not desirable to have unsightly hose-reel storage devices located in the garden area.

Another problem is that expensive materials such as plastic are used to form at least a portion of hose-reel cover.

20 A further problem is that in situations such as apartments where space on any balcony or outside area is restricted it is desirable to limit the number of items in an area.

It is an object of the present invention to overcome or ameliorate at least one of the disadvantages of the prior art, or to provide a useful alternative.

25 **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

To this end, the present invention provides a hose storage device, the device including:

an upper portion and a lower portion, the upper portion adapted to be seated upon and supported by the lower portion;

30 the upper portion including a side wall terminating with a lower edge;

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the lower portion including a side wall, the side wall including a port through which a hose may extend, and terminating with an upper edge;

a retractable hose reel housed within the lower portion;

wherein when the upper portion is correctly seated upon the lower portion one of the edges of the upper or lower portions is spaced outwardly from the other edge.

Preferably, when the upper portion is correctly seated upon the lower portion one of the edges of the upper or lower portions extends over the other edge.

Preferably, when the upper portion is correctly seated upon the lower portion the lower edge of the upper portion extends over the upper edge of the lower portion.

Preferably, the side wall of the upper portion terminates with a lower peripheral edge and the side wall of the lower portion terminates with an upper peripheral edge, wherein when the upper portion is correctly seated upon the lower portion the lower peripheral edge of the upper portion extends over the upper peripheral edge of the lower portion. Preferably, the lower peripheral edge of the upper portion is located radially outwardly from the upper peripheral edge of the lower portion.

Preferably, the side walls of the upper and lower portions are outwardly curved. Preferably, the lower peripheral edge of the upper portion lies approximately at the apex of the outwardly curved wall.

Preferably, the radially widest portion of the lower extremities of the side wall of the upper portion is located above or radially outwards of the upper extremities of the lower portion side wall.

Preferably, the upper portion further includes a base wall.

Preferably, the lower portion further includes a base wall.

Preferably, the side wall and base wall of the upper portion are contiguous and form a water tight vessel. Preferably, the base wall of the upper portion includes one or more drain holes. Preferably, the base wall of the upper portion includes a channel for collecting and directing water to the drain holes. Preferably, the channel extends around the outer perimeter of the base wall of the upper portion.

Preferably, either or both of the upper and lower portions are formed from fibre-glass reinforced concrete.

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Preferably, the port is formed as part of a recess in the side wall, the recess adapted to accommodate a hose fitting.

Preferably, the port is a vertical slot.

Preferably, the side or base of the lower portion has one or more holes or
5 channels to permit connection of water and/or electricity supply.

Preferably, the lower portion contains a space to accommodate a counterweight.

Preferably, the lower portion includes a cover.

Preferably, the upper portion takes the form of a pot for containing plants.

10 The preferred, but not limiting, form of the invention is an urn or pot with a lower portion of appropriate diameter and height to contain a retractable hose reel. The upper portion of the preferred form is watertight in the case where it forms part of a fountain or may have strategically placed drain holes to direct drainage water away from the roots of plants in such a way so as not to flow into the lower portion and
15 damage the garden hose and retractable hose reel mechanism.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

Preferred embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a cross-sectional side elevation of a preferred embodiment of a hose
20 storage device according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring to Fig. 1, the invention provides a hose storage device 1, including an upper portion 10 and a lower portion 60. The upper and lower portions 10, 60 may be formed from any suitable material, but are preferably formed using fibre-glass
25 reinforced concrete. Upper portion 10 is adapted to be seated upon lower portion 60. Upper portion 10 includes a side wall 20 and a base wall 15, with side wall 20 terminating with a lower peripheral edge 22. Lower portion 60 includes a side wall 65 and a base wall 70 which defines a space 72 for accommodating a retractable hose reel 80. Side wall 65 has an upper peripheral edge 66. In accordance with the invention,
30 when upper portion 10 is correctly seated upon lower portion 60, lower peripheral edge 22 of the upper portion extends over the upper peripheral edge 66 of the lower

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portion. Preferably, the lower peripheral edge of the upper portion is located radially outwardly from the upper peripheral edge of the lower portion.

In the preferred embodiment, the radially widest portion 23 of the lower extremity 22 of side wall 20 of upper portion 10 is located above or radially outward
5 of the upper extremity 67 of side wall 65 of lower portion 60.

In a preferred embodiment, side walls 20, 65 of upper and lower portions 10, 60 are outwardly curved, with the lower peripheral edge 22 of the upper portion located approximately at the apex 23 of the outwardly curved wall 20.

In a preferred embodiment base wall 15 and sides 20 of upper portion 10 are
10 contiguous and form a water tight vessel. The base wall 15 has a channel 25 around its outer perimeter adjoining the sides 20. When upper portion 10 is used as plant containing means channel 25 provides a means of collecting and directing water which falls upon base 15 to holes 30 placed strategically at one or more locations in the base of the channel so that water may drain from the container upper portion
15 without flooding the container lower portion.

One of the holes 30 may be used to provide access for water from a separate irrigation water supply (not shown) to provide water for any plants contained in the container upper portion.

Lower portion 60 consists sides 65 and a base wall 70 and, one of the sides has
20 a port 63 of appropriate shape and dimension to permit a hose 90 to be withdrawn from the hose reel when required. Port 63 may be formed (not shown) as part of a recess in the side such that any "clip-on" hose fitting is recessed into the recess thereby tending to hide the hose fitting. Port 63 may instead be a vertical slot.

Lower portion 60 contains the retractable hose reel 80 and supporting axle 85
25 on axle end locating means 86, 87.

Side 65 or base 70 has one or more holes or channels to permit connection of supply means such as water supply to the hose on the hose reel and/or electricity supply to operate lighting, pumps or valves to control water supply. The hose fitting and/or connecting hose and/or electricity supply cable may be located within an
30 appropriately formed recess or channel (not shown) in the side 65 and/or base 70 of the container lower portion 60. Such recess or channel is formed to hide or disguise the supply entry and, in the case of a channel in the base 70, will permit supply to

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enter into the container lower portion 60 without the hose or pipe or cable being crushed by the weight of the device. The supply may have one or more switches and/or valves control the supply of water or electricity.

Lower portion 60 contains a space 75 between the lower edge of the hose-reel 80 and the base 70 such space being provided to allow the fitting of a counterweight such as sand-bags to steady the device against the force exerted when pulling hose from the reel. Alternatively, the device may be steadied by fixing the base 70 by known fastening means into the desired position onto the surface upon which it stands.

The lower portion 60 may be constructed with a cover piece 62 (not shown) to which is connected axle end locating means 87. The lower portion 60 may also have formed on the inner surface of base 70 locating or housing means (not shown) such as lugs or ridges forming an annular locating means to locate annular axle end locating means 86 so that the axle end locating means 86 is restrained from moving when the hose-reel is under stress of extraction or retraction of the hose.

In another example (not shown), base wall 15 may be formed to create a downwards slope inwards from sides 20 to a low point hole in the centre above the axle 85. Axle 85 may be hollow so that drainage water can pass through the axle and pass out of the urn without staining sides 65 of lower portion 60 below holes 30.

Preferably, the upper portion 10 of the device may be used to contain or form part of any useful garden item, including but not limited to:-

- a pot for containing plants;
- a fountain or pond;
- part of statuary or statues;
- part of an illumination means;
- a device or storage area which may be refrigerated or heated.

Although the invention has been described with reference to specific examples it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the invention may be embodied in many other forms.